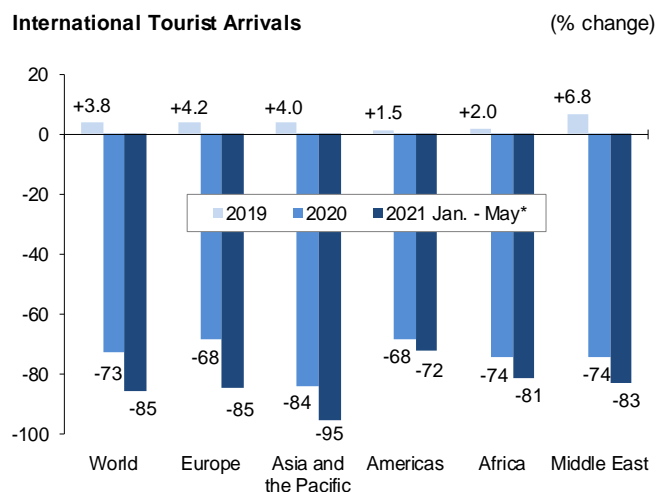


International Travel Largely on Hold Despite Uptick in May 2021

- International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) dropped by 85% in January-May 2021 compared to the same period of pre-pandemic year 2019, or 65% over 2020, as travel restrictions remained high due to the coronavirus pandemic. This follows an unprecedented drop of 73% in 2020, the worst year on record for international tourism.
- This sharp decline represents a loss of some 147 million international arrivals compared to the same five months of 2020, or 460 million compared to 2019.
- By regions, Asia and the Pacific continued to suffer the largest decline with a 95% drop in international arrivals in the first five months of 2021 over the same period in 2019. Europe (-85%) recorded the second largest decline in arrivals, followed by the Middle East (-83%) and Africa (-81%). The Americas (-72%) saw a comparatively smaller decrease.
- Despite the weak results, international tourism saw a minor uptick in May 2021 with arrivals declining by 82% (versus May 2019), after falling by 86% in April, as some destinations started to ease travel restrictions and consumer confidence rose slightly.
- After an estimated 64% plunge in international tourism receipts in 2020, destinations continued to report very weak revenues in the first five months of 2021, ranging from 50% to 90% declines compared to 2019. However, several countries recorded a small uptick in the month of May following a minor improvement in international arrivals.
- In terms of outbound travel among the top 20 source markets, Saudi Arabia (-42%) and Belgium (-46%) saw relatively better results in January-May 2021, as well as the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Switzerland, all recording 50% declines in international tourism expenditure compared to the same period in 2019. France is also worth noting, with -54% in expenditure compared to 2019.
- International travel is slowly picking up from very low levels, though the recovery remains fragile and uneven amid much uncertainty. Domestic travel is driving the recovery of tourism in several destinations, especially those with large domestic markets. Domestic air seat capacity in China and Russia has already exceeded pre-crisis levels.
- Along with the ongoing vaccination roll-out, the safe and responsible restart of tourism will continue to depend on a coordinated response among countries regarding travel restrictions, harmonized safety protocols and effective communication to help restore consumer confidence.



Source: UNWTO

* Provisional data (% change over 2019)



The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) is the United Nations specialized agency mandated with the promotion of responsible, sustainable and universally accessible tourism.

UNWTO's membership includes 159 countries, 6 Associate Members, two Permanent Observers, and over 500 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities.

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World Tourism Organization

C/ Poeta Joan Maragall 42, 28020 Madrid, Spain
Tel (34) 91 567 81 00 / Fax (34) 91 131 17 02
info@unwto.org - www.unwto.org

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About the *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*

The *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer* is a publication of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) that monitors short-term tourism trends on a regular basis to provide global tourism stakeholders with up-to-date analysis on international tourism.

The information is updated several times a year and includes an analysis of the latest data on tourism destinations (inbound tourism) and source markets (outbound tourism). The Barometer also includes three times a year a Confidence Index based on the UNWTO Panel of Tourism Experts survey, which provides an evaluation of recent performance and short-term prospects on international tourism.

The UNWTO Secretariat wishes to express its gratitude to those who have contributed to the production of this *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*, in particular to institutions that supplied data, and to the members of the UNWTO Panel of Tourism Experts for their valuable feedback and analysis.

This report was prepared by the **UNWTO Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department**, under the supervision of Sandra Carvão, Chief of the Department. Authors include (in alphabetical order): Fernando Alonso, Michel Julian, and Javier Ruescas.

For more information including copies of previous issues, please visit: www.e-unwto.org/loi/wtobarometereng.

We welcome your comments and suggestions at barom@unwto.org.

Data collection for this issue was closed mid-July 2021.

The next issue of the *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer* with more comprehensive results is scheduled to be published in October 2021.

Pages 1-4 of this document constitute the Excerpt of the *UNWTO World Tourism Barometer*. The full document is available free of charge for UNWTO Members and subscribers from the UNWTO elibrary at www.e-unwto.org. This release is available in English, while the Statistical Annex is provided in English, French, Spanish and Russian.

Inbound tourism

International tourism down 85% in January-May 2021

- International tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) dropped by 85% in January-May 2021 compared to the same period of pre-pandemic year 2019, or 65% over 2020, as travel restrictions remained high due to the coronavirus pandemic. This follows an unprecedented drop of 73% in 2020, the worst year on record for international tourism.
- This sharp decline represents a loss of some 147 million international arrivals compared to the same five months of 2020, or 460 million compared to 2019.
- By regions, Asia and the Pacific continued to suffer the largest decline with a 95% drop in international arrivals in the first five months of 2021 over the same period in 2019. Europe (-85%) recorded the second largest decline in arrivals, followed by the Middle East (-83%) and Africa (-81%). The Americas (-72%) saw a comparatively smaller decrease.
- Despite the weak results, international tourism saw a minor uptick in May 2021 with arrivals declining by 82% (versus May 2019), after falling by 86% in April, as some destinations started to ease travel restrictions and consumer confidence rose slightly. The month of April saw little improvement, reflecting limited cross-border travel during the Easter period in most destinations.
- In May 2021, the number of destinations with complete closure of borders decreased to 63 (representing 25% of world arrivals) from 69 (34%) in February. Asia and the Pacific remains the region with the largest number of closed destinations (33, representing 65% of world arrivals), while Europe has the lowest with 7 (8%).
- By subregions, the Caribbean (-60%) recorded the best relative performance through May 2021. Growing travel from the United States has benefitted destinations in the Caribbean and Central America, as well as Mexico. Western Europe, Southern and Mediterranean Europe, South America and Central America all saw slightly better results in May than in April, though most world subregions recorded decreases of 80% to nearly 100% in the first five months of 2021.
- Only a small number of destinations saw decreases below 40% in May 2021, among which Mexico, El Salvador, Albania and island destinations Saint Maarten, Dominican Republic, Aruba, Seychelles, Maldives.
- After an estimated 64% plunge in international tourism receipts in 2020, destinations continued to report very weak revenues in the first five months of 2021, ranging from 50% to 90% declines compared to 2019. However, several countries recorded a small uptick in the month of May following a minor improvement in international arrivals.
- In terms of outbound travel among the top 20 source markets, Saudi Arabia (-42%) and Belgium (-46%) saw relatively better results in January-May 2021, as well as the Republic of Korea, Malaysia and Switzerland, all recording 50% declines in international tourism expenditure compared to the same period in 2019. France is also worth noting, with -54% in expenditure compared to 2019.
- Domestic travel is driving the recovery of tourism in several destinations, especially those with large domestic markets. Domestic air seat capacity in China and Russia has already exceeded pre-crisis levels.

International Tourist Arrivals by (Sub)region

	Monthly/quarterly data series																
	(million)		Share (%)	Change		Percentage change (%)*											
				(%)		2021 over 2020						2021 over 2019					
	2019	2020*	2020*	19/18	20/19	YTD	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr. ²	May ²	YTD	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May
World	1,466	399	100	3.8	-72.8	-65.1	-85.8	-86.1	-61.0	331.7	299.0	-85.4	-85.8	-88.1	-86.3	-85.7	-81.7
Advanced economies ¹	777	214	53.6	2.1	-72.5	-70.2	-88.2	-90.1	-68.8	301.7	260.7	-88.4	-88.2	-91.4	-90.4	-89.6	-84.0
Emerging economies ¹	689	185	46.4	5.7	-73.1	-60.5	-83.8	-82.3	-54.8	352.8	344.0	-82.1	-83.6	-85.1	-82.1	-81.4	-78.7
By UNWTO regions:																	
Europe	746.3	235.9	59.1	4.2	-68.4	-63.1	-84.0	-87.0	-66.0	309.4	268.6	-84.7	-83.3	-86.7	-86.8	-86.7	-81.0
Northern Europe	83.7	21.5	5.4	3.3	-74.3	-82.5	-86.9	-92.1	-88.1	113.1	53.8	-92.1	-86.1	-91.8	-94.9	-92.8	-93.5
Western Europe	205.4	79.0	19.8	2.6	-61.5	-70.4	-86.8	-94.1	-76.4	282.0	211.3	-87.2	-86.1	-93.8	-92.3	-88.1	-78.2
Central/Eastern Eur.	153.2	47.2	11.8	4.8	-69.2	-58.3	-80.6	-78.7	-67.3	280.6	274.6	-80.8	-81.0	-79.7	-80.9	-81.9	-80.4
Southern/Medit. Eur.	304.0	88.2	22.1	5.3	-71.0	-52.7	-82.9	-83.9	-45.7	433.5	377.5	-82.7	-81.4	-83.2	-83.1	-86.5	-79.8
- of which EU-27	540.7	178.6	44.8	3.2	-67.0	-67.4	-86.0	-89.0	-69.2	191.6	199.5	-86.7	-85.4	-88.6	-89.3	-89.7	-82.0
Asia and the Pacific	360.4	56.9	14.3	4.0	-84.2	-86.2	-95.6	-94.0	-73.5	392.1	295.9	-95.5	-95.8	-97.1	-95.3	-94.7	-94.5
North-East Asia	170.3	20.2	5.1	0.7	-88.1	-74.5	-94.0	-86.2	-1.4	816.8	485.9	-94.7	-95.1	-97.3	-94.5	-93.4	-93.8
South-East Asia	138.6	25.5	6.4	7.8	-81.6	-94.7	-98.0	-97.3	-92.1	37.8	45.3	-97.8	-97.9	-98.3	-97.8	-97.6	-97.2
Oceania	17.5	3.6	0.9	2.4	-79.4	-93.1	-98.3	-98.6	-96.8	840.7	-	-96.7	-98.2	-98.9	-98.7	-94.7	-91.4
South Asia	34.0	7.6	1.9	7.5	-77.6	-79.5	-90.2	-90.5	-58.0	-	755.3	-89.4	-89.6	-90.9	-87.9	-89.4	-88.9
Americas	219.3	69.9	17.5	1.5	-68.1	-46.9	-76.2	-79.2	-45.3	379.3	389.7	-71.9	-76.0	-78.3	-72.3	-69.5	-63.9
North America	146.6	46.7	11.7	3.1	-68.1	-42.1	-71.3	-76.1	-46.5	258.0	255.2	-69.8	-70.4	-75.3	-70.7	-68.8	-65.0
Caribbean	26.3	10.3	2.6	2.0	-60.7	-24.2	-71.4	-71.5	-9.1	-	-	-59.8	-70.6	-69.5	-58.2	-52.4	-47.4
Central America	10.9	3.1	0.8	0.8	-71.7	-48.6	-79.5	-81.1	-36.0	955.1	-	-72.6	-80.0	-79.9	-71.2	-70.0	-58.3
South America	35.4	9.7	2.4	-4.7	-72.6	-79.3	-92.1	-92.5	-79.1	905.4	-	-88.6	-92.5	-92.3	-91.3	-87.0	-75.1
Africa	70.1	18.1	4.5	2.0	-74.2	-66.2	-81.4	-82.5	-70.6	107.8	105.4	-81.0	-81.3	-82.4	-82.0	-81.1	-78.2
North Africa	25.6	5.5	1.4	6.4	-78.4	-62.4	-79.1	-82.1	-58.0	-	-	-82.8	-78.7	-80.5	-85.4	-84.7	-83.7
Subsaharan Africa	44.5	12.5	3.1	-0.3	-71.9	-67.6	-82.4	-82.6	-73.6	48.8	55.4	-80.2	-82.4	-83.3	-80.2	-79.1	-75.3
Middle East	70.0	18.2	4.6	6.8	-74.0	-63.5	-83.6	-83.7	-36.9	-	-	-82.6	-82.1	-83.0	-82.0	-84.4	-81.5

Source: World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) ©

(Data as collected by UNWTO, July 2021)

* Provisional data

¹ Classification based on the International Monetary Fund (IMF), see the Statistical Annex of the IMF World Economic Outlook of April 2017, page 175, at www.imf.org/external/ns/cs.aspx?id=29.² Hyphens (-) indicate percentage change over 1000. (See Methodological Notes).

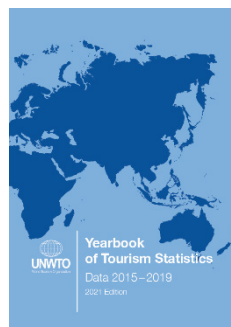
See box in page 'Annex-1' for explanation of abbreviations and symbols used.



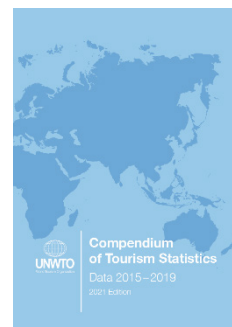
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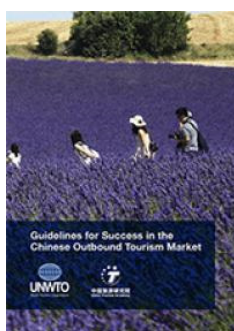
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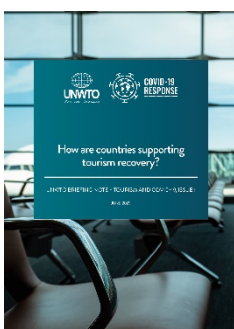
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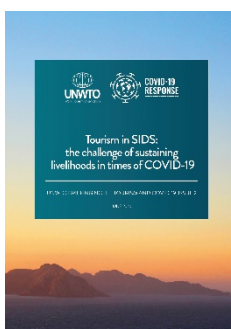
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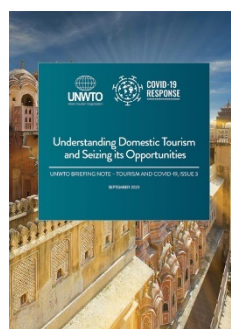
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